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SUBJECT: U/S TAUSCHER'S MEETINGS WITH FRENCH OFFICIALS

Classified By: DCM Mark Pekala, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

11. (C/NF) SUMMARY: Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher's February 2 meetings with French counterparts from the Elysee (presidency) and MFA included discussions of U.S. disarmament priorities, the NPT Review Conference (NPT RevCon), the Nuclear Security Summit, and missile defense. Meeting separately with NSA-equivalent Jean-David Levitte, Presidency Strategic Affairs Advisor Francois Richier, and MFA Strategic Affairs Director Patrick Maisonnave, U/S Tauscher reassured the French that while "a world without nuclear weapons" is a sincere USG ambition, the United States will not move precipitously and will take allies' interests into account. U/S Tauscher discussed next steps on NPT RevCon preparations, including thinking creatively about outcomes and minimizing the threat of disruptive Egyptian behavior. U/S Tauscher also clarified USG missile defense priorities, especially political support for territorial defense at the 2010 Lisbon NATO summit. END SUMMARY.

MOVING FORWARD ON DISARMAMENT

12. (C) U/S Tauscher stressed to Levitte, Richier, and Maisonnave that the U.S. position on disarmament is not far from that of France. President Obama's ambition for a world without nuclear weapons is sincere, but grounded in reality, and the United States will not act precipitously or jeopardize core French interests or our relationship. U/S Tauscher added that disarmament language in coming international forums, such as the April Nuclear Security Summit and the May Review Conference for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT RevCon), is important to the United States. However, the United States also wants a strong focus on non-proliferation. Tauscher stressed that the USG wanted to work with France to strike the right balance between disarmament and nonproliferation. The United States remains committed to an effective deterrent, and the President's recent budget proposal includes a significant increase for the maintaining of U.S. nuclear forces. Additionally, the forthcoming Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) will strengthen extended deterrence, focusing on the quality of the deterrent force rather than quantity.

13. (S/NF) Expressing relief at the USG commitment to coordination with France, Richier and Maisonnave nevertheless both stressed the French commitment to its nuclear deterrent, and Richier said the French worry that any unwelcome changes to U.S. declaratory policy in the NPR could signal a U.S. intention to insert the same policies into the NATO Strategic Concept. Richier noted that any such attempt could impact France's ability to integrate its nuclear forces into NATO. In such a situation they would have to declare their strategic forces totally independent. U/S Tauscher responded

that the French would not be surprised by the NPR because consultation would be ongoing, adding that the United States has no intention of acting unilaterally on nuclear issues in the NATO context. Richier noted that France was working on a paper that looks at its nuclear policy. As a result of their review, the GOF has concluded that their criteria for use are very limited.

¶4. (S/NF) Levitte asked when the administration was planning on pushing for ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), as U.S. ratification would be key to Chinese ratification, the true French goal. U/S Tauscher said that getting the post-START treaty ratified would be a first priority, but that discussions of CTBT would start soon, including an upcoming report by the National Academy of Sciences. Levitte stated that only when the U.S. ratifies the CTBT will it be possible to put real pressure on the Chinese. On a fissile material cutoff treaty (FMCT), Richier said the French have "reason to believe" that China has been pushing Pakistan to keep up its opposition to starting negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament, adding that Pakistan does not seem to care that it is isolated.

NUCLEAR SECURITY SUMMIT

¶5. (SBU) Richier and Maisonnave both reiterated France's position that the April Nuclear Security Summit in Washington should address radiological threats in addition to nuclear material. They also expressed GOF opposition to language in the draft communique calling for a "world without nuclear

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weapons." U/S Tauscher suggested that while the United States would insist on having disarmament language in the communique, the formulation agreed to in the G8 statement from the July 2009 L'Aquila summit may allow consensus. (NOTE: "We are...committed to...creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the NPT". END NOTE.) Richier and Maisonnave agreed that France could accept this language. They did note their concern that it may be difficult for all 44 countries invited to the Nuclear Security Summit to agree to this language, since some are not NPT members.

NPT REVCON

¶6. (S/NF) Richier and Maisonnave agreed with U/S Tauscher's analysis that Egyptian FM Aboul-Gheit will, if unchecked, work to undermine the RevCon with an aggressive posture on the Middle East Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ) resolution. U/S Tauscher outlined ongoing U.S. efforts to gain consensus language on the NWFZ, but underlined the need to contemplate a more forward-leaning strategy. She suggested considering possible phone calls from Presidents Obama and Sarkozy directly to Egyptian President Mubarak in the mid-March timeframe to sensitize the Egyptian president to the importance of the RevCon in strengthening the NPT and the unhelpful role the Egyptian MFA is playing. The French agreed on the likely need to elevate the issue beyond Aboul-Gheit. In this context, U/S Tauscher also brainstormed with the French on a final "package deal" that could be offered to the Egyptians, including new consensus language on a NWFZ, a conference on civilian nuclear power in the Middle East, and/or pushing Israel to accept CTBT. (NOTE: The latter two were unclear, spontaneous French suggestions. END NOTE.) U/S Tauscher said that, if Egypt is still not willing to budge, it may be worth finding other Non-Aligned Movement states that could be separated from Egypt with promises of assistance that Egypt would no longer receive.

¶7. (C) Levitte said that progress on Middle East peace prior to the RevCon would help greatly in creating a constructive

atmosphere, adding that he would pursue discussions on this linkage at the February 5-7 Munich Security Conference.

¶8. (C) Richier suggested that, in the absence of an acceptable and substantive final document, it may be possible to capitalize on other events prior to the RevCon, including the September UN Security Council summit, the Nuclear Security Summit, and the March OECD-hosted civilian nuclear energy conference in Paris. Richier said it may be worth looking into how to repackage the positive results achieved or expected at these events in a statement or document at the RevCon that acknowledges their importance in strengthening the NPT.

IRAN

¶9. (C) Levitte said that the French ambassador in Tehran believes that there is a growing split between the population and the regime that may be irreparable. The Iranian population thinks that action against the regime by the international community is good and France believes that it is important to support publicly those protesters taking to the street. Levitte noted that he had talked to Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki in Davos, Switzerland, in an attempt to get the Iranians to accept the Tehran Research Reactor Deal. Mottaki stated that Iran had "new ideas" but did not provide any details. Levitte stated that Iran was counting on tension between Washington and Beijing.

MISSILE DEFENSE

¶10. (C/NF) Levitte said the GOF is in the early stages of an interagency review on missile defense (MD). According to him, the "old guard" sees MD as a threat to France's nuclear deterrent, but he added that President Sarkozy has publicly stated that MD is in fact a welcome complement to deterrence.

France has no money for a NATO system, but would be happy to contribute specific capabilities. He added that President Sarkozy would not see specific proposals on the way forward for several weeks. Richier added that the more details the United States can provide on its own plans, the easier it is to "arbitrate between different factions" in the French

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government. In the NATO context, Maisonnave's deputy and NATO specialist Muriel Domenach said France's concerns about funding required for MD were amplified by its judgment that the costs for programs approved for common funding inevitably seem to rise after approval is given.

¶11. (C) U/S Tauscher and DAS Frank Rose clarified that the U.S. Phased Adaptive Approach (PAA) was the U.S. national contribution to a NATO system, and that the USG would provide all funding. U/S Tauscher stressed that the main U.S. priority was to gain political support at the head of state level for making territorial MD a NATO mission at the 2010 NATO summit in Lisbon. Tauscher noted that the United States wants NATO's Active Layered Theater Ballistic Missile Defense (ALTBMD) to provide the backbone to the Phased Adaptive Approach but that we would not make the Lisbon Summit a donors' conference.

OTHER ISSUES

¶12. (C) On the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, Maisonnave noted that the French government believes that the Treaty is dead. But, paradoxically, everyone believes it is a good treaty and there is no consensus on how to move forward. Germany, for example, does not believe it is dead. The French believe that it would be better to take

a Vienna Document-type approach to achieve some of the objectives of the CFE Treaty.

¶13. (C) Both Richier and Maisonnave raised the issue of the EC-151 Eurocopter. Richier noted that France classified it as a civilian helicopter. The French were concerned that the U.S. review on this issue continued to be postponed. U/S Tauscher agreed to look into this matter. She noted that a visit to the French factory was to occur soon and promised to get back to the French as soon as possible.

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